MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS VOLUME 4, ISSUE 2 2003

MICHIGAN CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

N E W S L E T T E R

Memories of Some Legal Challenges at the Beginning of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission

By U.S. Senator Carl Levin

The 60s were a challenging and heady time for the Civil Rights movement. I was delighted when John Feikens and Damon Keith, the dynamic first co-chairs of the new Michigan Civil Rights Commission, invited me on behalf of the Commission to become its first general counsel. Attorney General Frank Kelly appointed me Assistant Attorney General, so I could take on the responsibility as part of his office.

The newly created Commission had many legal challenges. The first one it undertook was to remove a racist bulletin board which the mayor of Dearborn, Orville Hubbard, maintained at Dearborn City Hall.

The Commission relied on the "equal protection" clause of the new Michigan Constitution, to go after a governmental activity whose sole purpose was to denigrate African Americans.

The Commission held a hearing with broad media coverage. We reproduced for the hearing a replica of the bulletin board with its dozens of racially inflammatory items. The Commission ordered the board's removal. Mayor Hubbard refused and challenged the Commission's jurisdiction. We brought suit in Wayne County Circuit Court. After a number of preliminary skirmishes, quite suddenly and unexpectedly, Mayor Hubbard agreed to remove the infamous bulletin board and accepted the jurisdiction of the Commission over discriminatory governmental actions.

Why did Mayor Hubbard cave in? I never knew for sure, but always believed it was principally due to the efforts of the very decent City Attorney for Dearborn, Ralph Guy, Jr., (later a Federal Judge) working behind the scenes to persuade his client that the city of Dearborn should no longer try to sustain its racist practice.

The next big legal challenge we took on was whether the Commission had jurisdiction over discriminatory housing practices. The Michigan Constitution was not precise regarding that jurisdiction and opponents argued that since there was not a statute prohibiting housing discrimination, in contrast to the existence of statutes prohibiting employment discrimination and discrimination in places of public accommodations, that the Commission did not have a "law" to enforce.

We selected as our test case the refusal of Pulte Company to sell a home to an African American high school counselor named Freeman Moore. The Pulte Company admitted that it refused to sell to Mr. Moore because of his race, and challenged the Commission's jurisdiction to require it to do so.

We argued two grounds before the Michigan Supreme Court. First, that the right to acquire property free of discrimination is a guaranteed civil right within the meaning of the Michigan Constitution. Second, because the Pulte Company's business was selling homes to the public, and because it advertised the availabilty of its homes widely to that public, it was a place of public accommodation that brought into play

Continued on page 3

IN THIS ISSUE

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL RIGHTS

Abdrabboh Appointed New Commissioner

In May 2003 Governor Jennifer M. Granholm announced the appointment of Mohammed Abdrabboh to serve as a member of the

Michigan Civil Rights Commission. "Mohammed will work with the Commission in ensuring that the citizens of Michigan are treated fairly and equally," Granholm said. "He has been a longtime advocate and fighter for civil rights, and I have no doubt that he will continue to protect our communities from discrimination."

Abdrabboh is a practicing attorney in the Detroit area who has been representing hundreds of victims of racial profiling and discrimination throughout the United States, particularly since September 11th. His extensive involvement earned him the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC) Pro Bono Attorney of the Year award for 2002.

Mohammed Abdrabboh earned his J.D. from the University of Toledo School of Law in 1999. After earning his J.D., Abdrabboh worked at Al-Haq-Law in the Service of Man in Ramallah, West Bank. As a legal researcher and advocate for human rights, Abdrabboh was instrumental to Al-Haq obtaining observer status to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR). Abdrabboh was the accredited representative of Al-Haq to the UNCHR and appeared before the UNCHR in Geneva on October 18, 2000. Abdrabboh has also been involved with the Landmine Monitor as a contributing author to the country report for the Syrian Golan in 1999 and 2000.

In discussing various civil liberty issues, Abdrabboh has been featured on CNN's Morning Show with Paula Zahn, Dateline NBC, The War on Terror with Rita Cosby, The Point with Greta Von Sustren, and has been cited in the New York Times, Washington Post, Chicago Tribune, Los Angeles Times, and various other newspapers throughout the AP wire.

Abdrabboh serves as a board member to the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC), chairman of the ADC advisory board, as well as a legal advisor to ADC. This year Abdrabboh was appointed to the advisory board at the University of Toledo Law School and began serving as a board member for the State of Michigan ACLU. Abdrabboh is a member of the Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes as well as Advocates and Leaders for Police and Community Trust (ALPACT).

NCCJ Walk-As-One 2003

MDCR was proud to participate in the annual "Walk As One" walk-a-thon to raise money and awareness about the National Conference for Community and Justice (NCCJ). The event was held on June 7, 2003, on Belle Isle in Detroit, Michigan. The event is used to fund NCCJ programs, including the Leadership In the New Century (LINC) comprehensive series of youth activities. These programs offer learning experiences to develop and expand young people's understanding of religious, racial, ethnic and cultural diversity and their ability to function effectively in a pluralistic society.

Pictured left to right: MDCR Director Nanette Lee Reynolds and Edtroit Rights Representative Betty Appleby.

Although thundershowers were expected, both the day and event turned out to be memorable and fun for all. MDCR colleagues joined approximately 250 to 300 walkers in the three mile walk to celebrate diversity. MDCR colleagues also volunteered their services in other ways, from collecting donations to serving food at the event.

Civil Rights Health: A Community Based Model

MDCR has partnered with Western Michigan University to create a non-judgemental community based model to measure and better understand civil rights related conditions. Using this model, a community can determine its own civil rights health, and identify ways to improve education, economic, and other social conditions within and around its borders. The project model was based on pilots conducted in Muskegon, Midland, and Pontiac, and has already been tested in Kalamazoo, Michigan. In fall 2003, the Department will begin training for individuals outside MDCR wishing to further understand this assessment model. If you represent a city or geographic area and you would like to utilize this assessment model, please call the department at 1-800-482-3604.

Memories...

Continued from page 1

the statute prohibiting discrimination at such places.

The Commission and Attorney General Frank Kelly were optimistic that we could win on the broad first ground. I thought that the narrower public accommodations argument was more likely to prevail.

In a breakthrough victory, the Michigan Supreme Court adopted a blended approach, finding a "civil right to private housing both at the common law and under the 1963 Michigan Constitution where, as in this case, that housing had been publicly offered for sale by one who is in the business of selling housing to the public."

Being the Michigan Civil Rights Commission's first General Counsel in the middle of the 1960s civil rights revolution was one of the most exhilarating and formative experiences of my professional life. I recently joined with some colleagues on the Senate Armed Services Committee and some retired military and defense department leaders in an amicus brief before the United States Supreme Court, in support of the University of Michigan's affirmative action policy.

I thought back to the Freeman Moore case and remembered how the tide of American history was in our favor and made a difference in our argument to the Michigan Supreme Court. I believe that tide includes greater opportunity and diversity in education and hopefully, that tide is still running strong.

Major Settlements

- Claimant, a Black woman from the Lansing area, alleged she was subjected to unequal terms and conditions of employment and discharged based on her race. Claimant was rehired and transferred with an annualized salary of $18,200.
- Claimant, a Saginaw area woman, alleged she was denied hire because of the perception that she had a disability. The matter was resolved when Claimant was hired with an annualized salary of $24,274.
- A Grand Rapids area woman alleged she was discharged because of the perception that she was disabled. The matter was resolved when she was rehired with an annualized salary of $18,720.
- Claimant, a 65 year old woman from the Saginaw area, alleged she was discharged because of her age. The matter was resolved when the woman was reinstated with an annualized salary of $10,000.
- Claimant, a Detroit area woman, alleged she was discharged because of her race. The matter was resolved with the rehiring of Claimant with an annualized salary of $27,268.
- A Kalamazoo area Black man alleged he was unfairly discharged because of his race. Claimant was reinstated with an annualized salary of $33,945.
- Claimant, a Flint area Black woman, alleged she was discharged because of her race. Claimant was rehired with an annualized salary of $36,348.
- A Mexican woman from the Grand Rapids area alleged she was discharged because of her race, national origin, and in retaliation for previous civil rights activity. The matter was resolved for a settlement of $35,000.

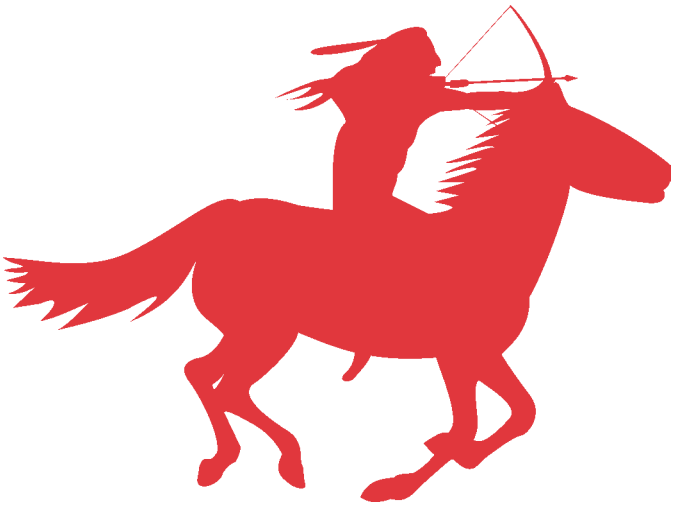
The Civil Rights Commission Newsletter is published quarterly by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights, 110 W. Michigan Ave., Capitol Tower Bldg. — Suite 800, Lansing, Michigan 48913.

Dr. Nanette Lee Reynolds, Director; Harold Core, Editor, (517) 241-3986. Residents with TDD units may call (313) 961-1552.

This newsletter is printed under authority of P.A. 453 and P.A. 220 of 1976, as amended. Number of copies printed: 4,800; Total cost: $1,441.70; Cost per copy: $0.40.

State Board of Education Passes Resolution Against American Indian Mascots

In May of 2002, the Michigan Civil Rights Commission (MCRC) passed a resolution to eliminate the use of a person's race or culture as a school's mascot, logo and nickname. Similarly, in June of 2003, the Michigan State Board of Education unanimously passed a resolution "strongly recommending



the elimination of American Indian nicknames, mascots or logos, fight songs, insignias, antics and team descriptors by Michigan public schools."

Resolutions by the State Board of Education are intended to guide the state's public school districts to adopt policies that are consistent and in the best interest of all students. The Michigan Department of Civil Rights and the Michigan State Board of Education are hopeful that the resolutions offer the encouragement necessary for school districts to be more sensitive of the diverse cultures among their student populations, and to set policies that are respectful of all students.

MCRC members and department staff worked closely with the State Board of Education in bringing awareness and understanding of the many issues affecting American Indian students.

The passing of the State Board of Education's resolution is important not only for the American Indian community but for all communities to recognize that when the race or culture of a group of people is used as mascots, logos, symbols or nicknames, it perpetuates stereotyping and insensitivity. "In a continual effort to eliminate discrimination, the Michigan Department of Civil Rights opposes any use of a person's culture or race as an athletic symbol." American Indian children are negatively impacted by the stereotypes, whether positive or negative, even if the intention of the school district is to honor the history of the American Indians. The name of a school, by itself, does not have the same negative impact of perpetuating stereotypes.

American Indian students suffer from high dropout rates and low standardized test scores. The nicknames, logos and mascots undermine the safe and nurturing environment needed for academic achievement.

In Michigan, there are approximately 57 schools currently using American Indian mascots, logos or nicknames. Some of the names include Braves, Chiefs, Indians, Warriors, Redskins, Reds and Redmen.

Both resolutions recommend the promotion of accurate, fair and appropriate depictions of all peoples' cultures and histories. The Civil Rights Commission's resolution: "Encourages all school districts to ensure that instructional materials, course work, policies, and procedures are respectful of cultural differences and enhance cultural competency, and are void of stereotypic language and representations."

Michigan schools utilizing racial mascots:

Indians - 27, Warriors - 15, Chiefs - 6, Braves - 4, Redskins - 4, Other - 1 Total = 57

Affirmative Action After the University of Michigan Cases

By W. Ann Warner
Attorney, Michigan Department of Civil Rights

Twenty five years after it first ruled on the issue, the United States Supreme Court (S Ct) has again addressed the issue of affirmative action in higher education. After the recent rulings in the University of Michigan (U-M) cases, what is the status of affirmative action in higher education? What exactly can colleges and universities do to achieve a diverse student body? What are they prohibited from doing? What is the likelihood that the cases can withstand a change in the makeup of the Supreme Court? This article will discuss both the undergraduate and law school decisions and some of the many questions raised by those opinions.

I. The Undergraduate Case - Gratz v. Bollinger, 2003 WL 21434002

A. The Court's Ruling

The S Ct held that "the manner in which the University considers the race of applicants in its undergraduate admissions guidelines violates" the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000(d)) and 42 U.S.C. 1981.

B. The Affirmative Action Plan

The university utilized a point system which granted points to applicants for various factors including high school grade point average, standardized test scores, academic quality of the applicant's high school, strength or weakness of high school curriculum, in-state residency, alumni relationship, personal essay and personal achievement or leadership. Under a miscellaneous category, an applicant received 20 points based upon membership in an under represented racial or ethnic group. An applicant could score a maximum of 150 points on this "selection index."

U-M established an Admissions Review Committee (ARC) to provide additional consideration for some applications. Counselors could, at their discretion, flag an application for the ARC to review after determining that the applicant 1) is academically prepared to succeed at U-M, 2) has a minimum selection index score, and 3) possesses a quality or characteristic important to U-M's composition of its freshman class, such as high class rank, unique life experiences, challenges, circumstances, interests or talents, socioeconomic disadvantage and under represented race, ethnicity, or geography. After reviewing flagged applications, the ARC determined whether to admit, defer or deny each application.

C. The Court's Analysis

The touchstone of the court's decision is its emphasis on individualized consideration. The court began its discussion with Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, 438 U.S. 265 (1978), where the court, through Justice Powell, held that no set number of seats at a university could be set aside for minorities, but that race could be taken into consideration in admissions policies.

In Bakke, Justice Powell emphasized the importance of considering each applicant as an individual and not as a member of a group. All of the qualities possessed by that individual should be assessed as should each individual's ability to contribute to the school's student body. No single characteristic, such as race, automatically ensures a specific and identifiable contribution to a school's diversity. Powell believed that is was a mistake to presume that all members of one race think in a particular manner and would contribute to the classroom in a particular manner.

Continued on page 6

The S Ct concluded that U-M's policy did not provide for such individualized consideration because the automatic distribution of 20 points for race "has the effect of making 'the factor of race... decisive' for virtually every minimally qualified under represented minority applicant."

> An example the court gave to illustrate its point: "The Admissions Committee, with only a few places left to fill, might find itself forced to choose between A, the child of a successful black physician in an academic community with promise of superior academic performance, and B, a black who grew up in an inner-city ghetto of semi- literate parents whose academic achievement was lower but who had demonstrated energy and leadership as well as an apparently abiding interest in black power. If a good number of black students much like A but few like B had already been admitted, the Committee might prefer B; and vice versa. If C, a white student with extraordinary artistic talent, were also seeking one of the remaining places, his unique quality might give him an edge over both A and B. Thus, the critical criteria are often individual qualities or experience not dependent upon race but sometimes associated with it.
>
> Even if student C's extraordinary artistic talent rivaled that of Monet or Picasso, the applicant would receive, at most, five points under [U-M's] system. At the same time, every single under represented minority applicant, including students A and B, would automatically receive 20 points. Clearly, the system does not offer applicants the individualized selection process. Instead of considering how the differing backgrounds, experiences, and characteristics of students A, B, and C might benefit the University, admissions counselors reviewing applications would simply award both A and B 20 points because they are African-American, and student C would receive 5 points for his "extraordinary talent."

II. The Law School Case - Grutter v. Bollinger, 2003 WL 21433492

A. The Court's Ruling

The Law School's narrowly tailored use of race in admissions decisions to further a compelling interest in obtaining the education benefits that flow from a diverse student body is not prohibited by the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution.

B. The Law School Admissions Policies

The U-M Law School does not use a point system in its efforts to achieve a diverse student body. The law school admissions policy depends to some extent on a grid which utilizes Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) scores and undergraduate grade point averages (UGPA) as a starting point. The Supreme Court explained the policy as follows:

> The hallmark of [the] policy is its focus on academic ability coupled with a flexible assessment of applicants' talents, experiences, and potential 'to contribute to the learning of those around them.' The policy requires admissions officials to evaluate each applicant based on all the information available in the file, including a personal statement, letters of recommendation, and an essay describing the ways in which the applicant will contribute to the life and diversity of the Law School. In reviewing an applicant's file, admissions officials must consider the applicant's undergraduate grade point average (GPA) and Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) score because they are important (if imperfect) predictors of academic success in law school. The policy stresses that 'no applicant should be admitted unless we expect that applicant to do well enough to graduate with no serious academic problems.' The policy makes clear, however, that even the highest possible score does not guarantee admission to the Law School. Nor does

Continued on page 7

> a low score automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, the policy requires admissions officials to look beyond grades and test scores to other criteria that are important to the Law School's educational objectives. So-called 'soft' variables' such as 'the enthusiasm of recommenders, the quality of the undergraduate institution, the quality of the applicant's essay, and the areas and difficulty of undergraduate course selection' are all brought to bear in assessing an 'applicant's likely contributions to the intellectual and social life of the institution.' (Citations omitted.)
>
> The policy aspires to 'achieve that diversity which has the potential to enrich everyone's education and thus make a law school class stronger than the sum of its parts.' The policy does not restrict the types of diversity contributions eligible for 'substantial weight' in the admissions process, but instead recognizes 'many possible bases for diversity admissions.' The policy does, however, reaffirm the Law School's longstanding commitment to 'one particular type of diversity,' that is, 'racial and ethnic diversity with special reference to the inclusion of students from groups which have been historically discriminated against, like African-Americans, Hispanics and Native Americans, who without this commitment might not be represented in our student body in meaningful numbers.' By enrolling a 'critical mass' of [under represented] minority students,' the Law School seeks to 'ensur[e] their ability to make unique contributions to the character of the Law School.'

C. The Court's Analysis

"The Fourteenth Amendment protects persons, not groups ... ." The court based its analysis and conclusion on the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution, which states "no state shall deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." The court's reasoning is best explained by the Court's own words.

" ... a university may consider race or ethnicity only as a 'plus' in a particular applicant's file, without insulating the individual from comparison with all other candidates for the available seats."... "The Law School's interest is not simply 'to assure within its student body some specified percentage of a particular group merely because of its race or ethnic origin. This would amount to outright racial balancing, which is patently unconstitutional."

> [t]he Law School engages in a highly individualized, holistic review of each applicant's file, giving serious consideration to all the ways an applicant might contribute to a diverse educational environment. The Law School affords this individualized consideration to applicants of all races. There is no policy ... of automatic acceptance or rejection based on any single 'soft' variable. Unlike the program at issue in Gratz v. Bollinger [the undergraduate case], the Law School awards no mechanical, predetermined diversity 'bonuses' based on race or ethnicity.
>
> The Law School's race-conscious admissions program adequately ensures that all factors that may contribute to student body diversity are meaningfully considered alongside race in admissions decisions. With respect to the use of race itself, all under represented minority students admitted by the Law School have been deemed qualified. By virtue of our Nation's struggle with racial inequality, such students are both likely to have experiences of particular importance to the Law School's mission, and less likely to be admitted in meaningful numbers on criteria that ignore those experiences.
>
> '[T]here are many possible bases for diversity admissions ... admittees who have lived or traveled widely abroad, are fluent in several languages, have overcome personal adversity and family hardship, have exceptional records of extensive community service, and have had successful careers in other fields. The Law School seriously considers each 'applicant's promise

Continued on page 8

> of making a notable contribution to the class by way of a particular strength, attainment, or characteristic--e.g., an unusual intellectual achievement, employment experience, nonacademic performance, or personal background.' All applicants have the opportunity to highlight their own potential diversity contributions through the submission of a personal statement, letters of recommendation, and an essay describing the ways in which the applicant will contribute to the life and diversity of the Law School.
>
> What is more, the Law School actually gives substantial weight to diversity factors besides race. The Law School frequently accepts nonminority applicants with grades and test scores lower than under represented minority applicants (and other nonminority applicants) who are rejected. This shows that the Law School seriously weighs many other diversity factors besides race that can make a real and dispositive difference for nonminority applicants as well. By this flexible approach, the Law School sufficiently takes into account, in practice as well as in theory, a wide variety of characteristics besides race and ethnicity that contribute to a diverse student body.

(Citations omitted; my emphasis.)

D. The End Point

Finally, the court set forth its view that "all governmental use of race must have a logical end point." The Law School conceded, at oral argument before the Court, that race-conscious admissions programs must have durational limits. The Court expressed support for "sunset provisions" in admissions policies and periodic reviews to determine whether racial preferences are still necessary to achieve student body diversity. In addition, the Court noted that universities in California, Florida and Washington, where racial preferences in admissions are prohibited by state law, are "currently engaged in experimenting with a wide variety of alternative approaches." Other Universities were encouraged by the Court to "draw on the most promising aspects of these race-neutral alternatives as they develop."

The court selected 25 years as the time in which it would like to see race-conscious affirmative action plans end:

It has been 25 years since Justice Powell first approved the use of race to further an interest in student body diversity in the context of public higher education. Since that time, the number of minority applicants with high grades and test scores has indeed increased. We expect that 25 years from now, the use of racial preferences will no longer be necessary to further the interest approved today.

III. What Does it all Mean?

A diverse student body still constitutes a compelling state interest; the importance of diversity in higher education was clearly reaffirmed by these cases. But what exactly may a college or university do, consistent with the U.S. Constitution, to ensure a diverse student body? Many legal commentators have opined that the opinions raises questions but provides few, if any, answers.

Jeffrey Toobin, Legal Analyst for NBC and MSNBC, stated that the Supreme Court "confirmed the right, but not the practice." This is basically correct. Universities have the right to take race into consideration in the admissions process, but the way in which they do so must change and the Court has given little guidance as to how schools should proceed. Toobin believes that any affirmative action program that utilizes numbers in any form or manner will eliminate those numbers immediately and review each and every application in detail to determine whether the individual will contribute in some unique way to the school. Professor Lani Guinier of Harvard Law School singled out the Court's "holistic and individual" approach in her commentary on and approval of the law school decision.

Continued on page 9

Others have pointed out that when all numbers and formulas are removed from the process, universities will be forced to review each application in much more detail and this will for many schools necessitate additional staff. The admissions process will be more burdensome and time-consuming but, as the Court noted, schools and other governmental bodies have never won such cases by arguing that administrative burdens will be increased. Constitutional rights are paramount; the court responds to administrative burden arguments by saying, basically, that where important constitutional rights are at stake, the entity will simply have to find a way to vindicate the right despite any additional burdens.

In addition, the admissions process will be much more subjective. The only guideline seems to be that each individual applicant's contribution to a diverse classroom must be considered and no presumptions can be made that a given minority group will express "some characteristic minority viewpoint on any issue." That is exactly why the law school argued for the need to admit a "critical mass" of minority students - so that minorities are represented in "meaningful numbers" which will encourage minority students to participate in the classroom and not feel isolated or feel that they are "spokespersons for their race." "... when a critical mass of under represented minority students is present, racial stereotypes lose their force because nonminority students learn there is no 'minority viewpoint." Because the law school did not use a number, percentage, or range of numbers to define what exactly constitutes a critical mass - and the Court noted with approval the lack of any numbers - one is left to ponder how many students of a particular racial or ethnic group constitutes a critical mass.

Others argue that it will actually be easier now for colleges to put more emphasis on race in admissions. "It is tricky to figure out what exactly is so different between doing something overtly and doing something covertly. That is the paradox to what the court has done," said Professor Samuel Issacharoff of Columbia University. "The irony ... is that an admissions policy with clear guidelines on how to evaluate minority applicants could be challenged as unconstitutional, but a more informal and subjective policy would be safer from challenge" states Jodi Cohen of the Detroit Free Press, citing the opinions of legal scholars.

At Carnegie Mellon University, 11 admissions officers and six readers consider race "like any other call. You can argue in some cases, you may not give it anything. If the student had all opportunities to perform and do well academically ... and did not do well, there is no reason to give those students an extra look just because of an under represented minority background."

IV. What if There is a Change on the Court?

Both cases were 5 - 4 decisions, with Justice O'Connor, as predicted, being the pivotal vote to uphold diversity as a compelling state interest and to reaffirm affirmative admissions policies. But it is no secret that Justice O'Connor wants to retire, as does Justice Rehnquist. Given that the Bush Administration submitted a brief in opposition to U-M's position, it is anticipated that any nominee selected by Bush to replace a retiring justice would be opposed to affirmative action in any form. If Justice O'Connor is the retiree, she will most likely be replaced by a nominee who, if on the court when these cases were decided, would have voted against U-M's Law School admissions policy. President Bush was clear during the litigation of these cases that he did not support either plan; indeed, he referred to the policies as "quotas" even though neither was.

So while supporters of affirmative action applauded the rulings, the celebrations were tempered by the knowledge that the victory may be temporary and affirmative action could be ruled unconstitutional in all forms if the makeup of the Court changes by one justice. For now, however the historic Bakke decision has been reaffirmed.

MDCR Around the State

MDCR attempts to balance complaint investigation with outreach and education resources for public and private organizations concerned with issues like sexual harassment, diversity, disability discrimination, housing discrimination and strategies to prevent unlawful discrimination.

From October 1, 2002 - April 30, 2003, the Department has:

- Received around 6,000 contacts, recording about 2,204 contacts for information and referral
- Opened 1,049 complaints, and completed 989 complaints
- Expanded its 1-800-482-3604 coverage to include a 5:00PM - 8:00AM emergency hotline for anyone needing immediate response to a backlash incident, hate crime or bias incident within the state of Michigan.
- Established an Expanded Community Liaisons (ECL) program designed to give the Department a presence in communities where regional offices are not present. ECLs are assigned to: **Adrian, Alpena, Ann Arbor, Battle Creek, Benton Harbor, Chippewa County, Holland, Jackson, Mackinac County, Midland, Monroe, Mount Clemens, Mount Pleasant, Muskegon, Pontiac, Port Huron, and Ypsilanti.**

October 1, 2002 -May 15, 2003 regional breakdown:

Lansing Team

- Received about 540 new contacts, and recorded about 134 calls for information and referral.
- Served about 20 different area organizations through outreach and education activities, including Ingham Regional Medical Center, and two state agencies.

Grand Rapids Teams

- Received about 948 new contacts, and recorded about 385 calls for information and referral.
- Recorded 77 outreach and education activities, including activities with Wal-Mart and several area high schools and colleges.

Kalamazoo Team

- Received about 598 new contacts, and recorded about 606 calls for information and referral.
- Recorded eight contacts for outreach and education services, including contacts for diversity training with government agencies in the area.

Saginaw Team

- Received about 615 new contacts, and recorded about 290 calls for information and referral.
- Recorded about 15 contacts for outreach and education services, including several area school districts.

Flint Team

- Received about 387 new contacts, and recorded about 60 calls for information and referral.
- Served around 90 area citizens through presentations on sexual harassment, diversity and general civil rights law, in addition to various outreach activities to connect with area business and social organizations.

Detroit Teams

- Received about 3,118 new contacts, and recorded about 822 calls for information and referral.
- Recorded 70 outreach and education activities, including activities with the Detroit Area Metro Teen Conference.

Marquette Office

- Received 160 new contacts and recorded about 274 calls for information and referral.
- Recorded about 36 outreach and education activities, including several with local government entities and school districts.

Commission Honors Poster Contest Winners

At the May 19, 2003, Commission meeting the winners of the 40th Anniversary poster contest were honored for their illustrations. The winning illustrations were chosen from among hundreds of submissions from Michigan's public and charter elementary and secondary schools. Copies of the winning drawing were distributed throughout the state as part of the Michigan Civil Rights Commission's 40th Anniversary celebration.

Pictured from left to right: Ron D. Robinson, J.D., Assistant Attorney General; Francisco J. Villarruel, J.D., Commission Treasurer; Albert Calille, J.D., Commission Vice-Chair; Stephanie Balaskas of Northern Hills Middle School in Grand Rapids, 2nd place winner; Dr. Tarun K. Sharma, Commissioner; Edwin Gutierrez, Hanneman Elementary School in Detroit, 1st place winner; Gary Torgow, J.D., Commission Chair; Bishop George Brown, Commissioner; Margaret M. Van Houten, J.D., Commisioner; David Coady, Cass Technical High School in Detroit, 3rd place; Catherine Game, Mountain High School in Iron Mountain, 3rd place winner; Nanette Lee Reynolds, Ed.D., Department Director

Commission and Department News

In September 2003, Commission Chair Gary Torgow was honored with one of three Fair Housing Leadership Award by the Fair Housing Center of Metropolitan Detroit.

Director Reynolds, on behalf of the Department, has received several awards over the past few months including: being selected as a 2003 Women of Achievement by the Anti-Defamation League,; a Civil rights Award in June 2003 from the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee; the city of Flint Human Relations Commission's Edgar Holt Human rights Award on September 18, 2003; and an Award for Innovative Joint Outreach from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in May 2003. On July 19, 2003, Director Reynolds also received the Individual Achievement Award fro the International Association of Human Rights Agencies. (IAOHRA).

Commission Chair Gary Trogow

MDCR Director Nanette Lee Reynolds

Michigan Department of Civil Rights
Customer Service Options

Information

Outreach and Education

◆ Training ◆ Speakers ◆ Crisis Intervention

Referral

Complaint Resolution

Mediation

1-800-482-3604

www.michigan.gov/mdcr

Commission Meeting Dates

November 17, 10 a.m.	Lansing

Michigan Civil Rights Commission

Chair
Gary Torgow, J.D.
Oak Park

Vice Chair
Albert Calille, J.D.
Plymouth

Treasurer
Francisco J. Villarruel, J.D.
Livonia

Secretary
Valerie P. Simmons, J.D.
Grand Rapids

Bishop George Brown
Detroit

Dr. Tarun K. Sharma
Grosse Pointe

Margaret M. Van Houten, J.D.
Dearborn Heights

Mohammed Abdrabboh, J.D.
Dearborn

State of Michigan
Michigan Department
of Civil Rights
110 West Michigan, Suite 800
Lansing, Michigan 48913

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LANSING, MICH.
PERMIT NO.
1200